

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TEL AV 08621 231518Z
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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETRD, IS, EAGR

SUBJECT: GENERAL FOODS PROBLEM WITH ISRAELI METRIC CONTAINER

REF: STATE 306844

1. PROBLEM DISCUSSED WITH GENERAL FOODS AGENT, KAPLAN NAIM & COMPANY. SAID THEY HAD BEEN TURNED DOWN BY MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY ON EXTENSION OF WAIVER. ACCORDING TO AGENT SOME BRAZILIAN COFFEE COMING IN NON-STANDARD METRIC PACKAGES (I.E. OUNCES) BUT SHIPPER HAD AFFIXED LABELS SHOWING 100 GRAMS EVEN THOUGH CONTAINER HELD 113 GRAMS. THIS SEEMS TO BE VERY UNSATISFACTORY SOLUTION TO BOTH EMBASSY AND AGENT.

2. IN MEETING WITH AVRAHAM BEN-MOSHE, HEAD OF FOOD DIVISION OF MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY, EMBASSY OFFICERS WERE TOLD THAT KAPLAN NAIM AND COMPANY HAD ALREADY HAD TWO WAIVERS (ONE GENERAL WAIVER FOR A YEAR AND THE OTHER SPECIAL WAIVER FOR SIX MONTHS). MINISTRY VERY RELUCTANT TO GRANT YET ANOTHER WAIVER SINCE THIS WOULD BE DISCRIMINATION AGAINST OTHERS WHO ARE COMPLYING, CONFUSING TO CONSUMERS, AND NO LONG - RUN SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM.

3. BEN-MOSHE NOTED THAT ISRAELI MANUFACTURERS HAD HAD TO MAKE ADJUSTMENTS IN ORDER TO COMPLY WITH U.S. PACKAGING
UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 02 TEL AV 08621 231518Z

AND LABELLING REQUIREMENTS AND HE FOUND IT DIFFICULT TO UNDERSTAND WHY U.S. MANUFACTURERS SHOULD NOT BE EXPECTED TO DO SAME WHEN EXPORTING TO ISRAEL. HE SAID THAT TO HIS KNOWLEDGE COFFEE HAS BEEN ONLY IMPORTED FOOD ITEM HAVING PROBLEMS COMPLYING WITH REGULATIONS.

4. EMBASSY OFFICERS POINTED OUT THAT EC HAD GRANTED EXTENSIONS TILL 1980 FOR COMPLIANCE WITH MANY OF THEIR METRIC REGULATIONS BECAUSE OF DIFFICULTY OF U.K. AND NON EC EXPORTERS IN MEETING 1978 DEADLINE.

5. BEN-MOSHE THEN SAID HE WOULD HOLD FURTHER DISCUSSIONS WITH KAPLAN NAIM AND CO. AND EXPLORE POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS E.G., AFFIXING SPECIAL LABELS IN HEBREW GIVING UNIT PRICE OF STANDARD QUANTITIES, ETC. HOWEVER, HE GAVE NO, REPEAT NO, ASSURANCE THAT A FURTHER WAIVER WOULD BE GRANTED.

6. ON THE BROADER ASPECT OF LATEST INFORMATION ON ISRAEL'S METRIC CONVERSION REQUIREMENT AFFECTING IMPORTS, HE SAID HE WOULD PROVIDE US WITH COPIES OF PERTINENT REGULATIONS FROM HIS DIVISION. WE WILL SECURE REGULATIONS AND FORWARD TO WASHINGTON.
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